

INFOTECH

Jiminy Cricket Revisited:

A Dozen Ways Video Can Activate Learning

Annette Lamb and Larry Johnson

Back in the 1950s, Walt Disney's educational films starring Jiminy Cricket introduced the idea that short, single concept movies for children could be an effective, efficient, and appealing way to learn. Video continues to be a popular classroom resource today.

However, the novelty of video in the classroom wore off decades ago, and today's students are inundated with video content. We can keep students mentally and physically alive in today's technology-saturated world by combining video with active learning experiences.

As we help teachers identify quality video to integrate into classroom activities, it's important to think about how the video might be used as part of a learning experience.



Jiminy Cricket Presents

A DOZEN IDEAS

Let's explore a dozen ways to extend the video-based learning experience beyond the video screen.

1 - Authors Alive

The Reading Rockets <readingrockets.org/books/interviews> website contains over 100 interviews with famous children's book authors. Seeing an author talk about his or her books can bring reading alive for children. Their Author Study Toolkit <readingrockets.org/books/authorstudy> provides lots of ideas for creating author studies to go along with the videos.

Scholastic Videos <scholastic.com/browse/video.jsp> is another great source for author interviews. Go to the AuthorTube <scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plan/author-video-index> page for Scholastic lesson ideas. You can also find videos at the individual publisher websites.

For young adult authors, explore author interviews at the AdLit website <adlit.org/articles/authors>.

The Barnes and Noble <goo.gl/ndyja> website provides free picture books read aloud by their authors. In addition, the site provides author interviews.

2 - Interview Investigators

Many videos contain interviews. How authentic are these? Do they represent the experiences or views of students in your school? Rather than simply have students watch interviews, ask them to actively think about how the content connects to their lives.

Teaching students to become digital citizens is an important 21st century skill. It's essential that students have the knowledge and skills to make responsible decisions about the use of technology. However, students also need to internalize these skills through practical experiences. Ask students to watch the Cybersafety videos from NetSmartz <nsteens.org/videos/offlineconsequences>. Then, discuss which interviewee most closely reflected their perspectives and experiences. Involve students by having them interview their peers using the questions from the videos.

3 - Act It Out

From peer pressure to animal interactions, many videos teach students about relationships. Get students involved in discussing these relationships and acting them out.

The Arkive website <arkive.org> has many videos featuring animals from around the world. Ask students to view video clips showing symbiotic relationships such as the interaction of the Clownfish and Sea Anemone <goo.gl/JiAFg>. Then, act them out with puppets or paper models. A similar activity could focus on animal locomotion. After they watch animals move, ask the students to replicate their movements.



YA FICTION

INTRIGUE!

Code Name Verity. Wein, Elizabeth. Hyperion, 2012. \$16.99. 978-1-4231-2194. Grades 9-up. During World War II, two British young women unexpectedly become friends: Lady Julia, an impulsive aristocrat, and Maddie, a methodical farm girl. When Maddie, a transport pilot, flies Julie, a spy, into Nazi-occupied France, drama and danger ensue. First Julie, an unreliable narrator, tells the story; then Maddie, desperate to help her friend, takes over in this outstanding, complex, and heartbreaking novel.

Double. Valentine Jenny. Hyperion, 2012. \$16.99. 9781423147145. Grades 8-up. All homeless Chap, 16, wants is a family to love. He seizes the chance when he learns he's identical to a missing boy named Cassiel. Amazed at how easily Cassiel's family accepts him, Chap starts to get uneasy—what really happened to the other boy? Is he, himself, in danger? Plot twists, suspense, and a dramatic climax make this clever British import a page-turner.

Grave Mercy. LaFevers, Robin. Houghton, 2012. \$16.99. 9780547628349. Grades 9-up. The first book in a series, this fast-paced novel takes place in 15th century France. Ismae, 17, escapes an abusive past by entering an unusual convent, where she's trained in assassination techniques and sent out to fight for political causes. But she's unprepared for a possible assassination target who starts winning her heart. Hints of magic enter into this vivid, gripping thriller.

Tokyo Heist. Renn, Diana. Viking, 2012. \$17.99. 9780670013326. Grades 7-10. Violet, 15, who loves manga and Japanese culture, jumps at the chance to go to Tokyo with her father. He has a commission there and she's on the trail of dangerous art thieves who've stolen some Van Gogh drawings. Her own escapades echo those of Kimono Girl, the magical teen in the graphic novel Violet's creating. Perfect for manga and mystery buffs.

The Arkive website has a tool for creating and saving image collections called MyArkive. This makes organizing tools for a presentation or activity much easier.

The National Geographic Video <video.nationalgeographic.com/video/animals> page is another great source for animal videos.

After watching videos about dinosaurs or other prehistoric creatures, go to the playground and compare the size of the creatures to children with chalk. Go to What Does It Take to Make a Monster Snake? <goo.gl/0Xfv9> from the Smithsonian Channel <smithsonianchannel.com> for an example of connecting video viewing with live outdoor activities.

4 - Take a Stand

The Google Elections <google.com/elections/ed/us> page provides news and videos on elections in the United States as well as around the world. Students can view content by candidates and by issues.

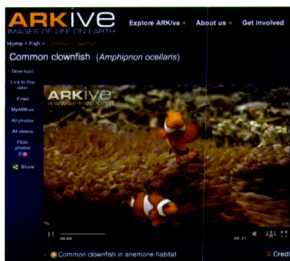
Get students involved in producing their own election issue video. What do they see as the key issues? How would each candidate stand on the issues?

The C-SPAN Video Library <c-span-video.org/videoLibrary> is another great source for video election coverage. Ask students to choose a video that represents a particular point of view. Then, create a poll using a tool like Flisti <flisti.com> to see whether their classmates agree or disagree with the candidate's perspective.

5 - Bring in the Real World

Video provides an excellent, real-world context for discussions. Whether examining the impact of erosion on a hillside or analyzing the interactions at a presidential debate, look for video segments that serve as authentic examples of content being taught in the classroom. Use these videos as the basis for a discussion of how the simplified concepts we learn in school become more complicated in the "real-world."

For instance, students in an emergency training course need to learn about the



Clownfish and Sea Anemone from Arkive

role of by-standers in an accident situation. Ask students to watch an Amazing Rescue video at YouTube <youtu.be/PUX-PWx4YW20>. Then, talk about the roles represented by the various bystanders. Watch the video again focusing on a particular bystander. Then, re-enact the situation discussing the various roles.

Use of YouTube videos can be a problem if they are filtered in your school. However, there are two ways to address this problem.

First, consider using the School Version of YouTube <youtube.com/schools>. Using your school Google account, it's possible to set up a controlled environment for using YouTube. Students are able to watch YouTube EDU videos plus videos added by teachers. All comments and related videos are disabled.

Second, download the video you wish to use from YouTube. You can then run the video from your school server or embed it in a presentation. Use tools like KeepVid <keepvid.com>, Save Media <savemedia.com>, and ZamZar <zamzar.com> to download online videos.

6 - Role Play

Students enjoy role-playing activities. Use video to jump-start these activities. Kids.gov <youtube.com/kidsgov> is a YouTube Channel that provides a wide range of U.S. government-produced videos.

For instance, their Careers Series explores occupations such as oceanographer, animal keeper, and architect. After watching a career video, ask students to learn more about the vocation. Then, have them



ADULT BOOKS FOR TEENS

ASSORTED FICTION

Afterwards. Lipton, Rosamund. Crown, 2011. \$25.00. 978-0-307-71654-5. Grades 9-12. Grace Covey, realizing her seventeen-year-old daughter, Jenny, is trapped inside a burning school, rushes in to save her. Although both are comatose and severely injured, their spirits communicate with each other and narrate the novel. This affecting novel about family bonds should appeal to Jodi Picoult fans.

Iron house. Hart, John. St. Martin's, 2011. \$25.99. 978-0-312-38034-2. Grades 11-12. Tormented at Iron House orphanage, Julian's only protection is his brother Michael. When Michael is blamed for a boy's death and runs away, a wealthy couple adopts Julian. Street-wise Michael becomes a Mob assassin. When fate throws the brothers together again, Michael uncovers family secrets, crooked politicians, and blackmail in this fast-paced thriller.

The Snow Child. Ivey, Eowyn. Little, Brown, 2012. \$24.99. 978-0-316-17567-8. Grades 9-12. Jack and Mabel, homesteading in the brutal wilds of Alaska, appear to get the child they long for when a snow girl they make seemingly comes to life as blonde, mysterious Faina. Based on a Russian fairy tale, this unusual historical fiction novel is well written, compelling, and surprising.

The Third Gate. Child, Lincoln. Doubleday, 2012. \$25.95. 978-0-385-53138-2. Grades 9-12. Professor Jeremy Logan, investigator of supernatural occurrences, is summoned to an archeological dig in the Sudan when bizarre accidents and deaths afflict the site. A great blend of Egyptian curses, near death experiences, and unusual events makes reading this novel feel like watching an action movie.

The screenshot shows a Google search for 'Healthcare' with the 'Politics & Elections' filter selected. The results list several candidates: Barack Obama (D), Joe Biden (D), Mitt Romney (R), Paul Ryan (R), Jill Stein (D), Cheri Honkala (G), Gary Johnson (L), and Jim Gray (L). Under the 'Issues' section, topics like Economy, Government Spending, Healthcare, Immigration, Jobs & Unemployment, National Security, and Social Issues are listed. Three video thumbnails are visible, each with a title and a brief description: 'Tester hit by Concerned Women for America', 'Obama focuses on Medicare in weekly address', and '60 Plus Association hits Baldwin in Wisconsin'.

Google Elections videos

play the role of the person whose career they studied, sharing information about their job.

The USA.gov YouTube channel <youtube.com/user/USGovernment> focuses on videos for high school students and adults. Videos are categorized for easy access. It also contains a great master list of featured government channels for more ideas.

7 - Activate with the Arts

You can read about different cultures and think about ways to experience these cultures through art, music, dance, and other active learning experiences.

ArtsEdge <goo.gl/Jffl8> has a multimedia section connected to a wide range of videos including American Blues and traditional Chinese music. Explore the role of dance, music, theater, and visual arts in cultures around the world. Then, ask students to learn about how the arts are reflected in the culture. Use video to illustrate their findings.

The Powwows <tv.powwows.com> website features music and dances by Native American tribes from across North America. Ask students to compare these modern cultural events with their historical roots.

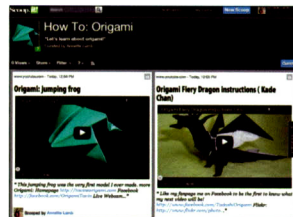
The Silk Road Project <youtube.com/user/silkroadproject> contains videos that reflect the culture of the Silk Road.

The Smithsonian Folkways <youtube.com/user/SmithsonianFolkways> channel features musical artists performing live and discussing their work. The project reflects music from around the world.

8 - How to Do Anything

Demonstrations are an effective way to teach procedures. These "how to" videos are popular on the web. Art is an area where video is particularly useful. Create a learning station with a laptop, headphones, and the materials needed for the project.

It's easy to get overwhelmed by the volume of video available on the Internet.



Scoop.it for video curation



ADULT BOOKS FOR TEENS

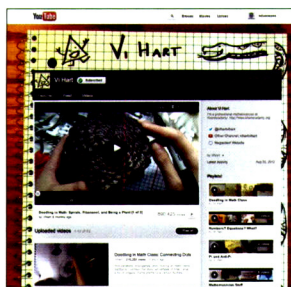
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Vi Hart's YouTube Video Channel

Spend some time curating the best websites associated with the curriculum. Scoop.it <scoop.it> is one of many tools for easily presenting a set of videos to students. For instance, students reading about origami may use the How To: Origami page from Scoop.it <scoop.it/h/how-to-origami>. Videos are easy to add, and descriptions can be created to meet instructional needs.

For fun elementary grade "how to" videos, go to Activity TV <activitytv.com>. Consider a display containing crafts, magic, art, and science experiment books along with a laptop showing videos.

9 - Step-by-Stepping

From step-by-step instructions to explanations with quality examples, tutorial videos are a great resource for visual and auditory learners. Vi Hart <youtube.com/user/Vihart> is known for her outstanding math videos. She connects math with art and music for real-world explanations of math concepts.

Get students involved in creating their own math videos with a Flip camera. Ask students to explain a math concept using dry erase markers on their desks or white boards. Or, provide props and manipulatives to use in their explanations.

YouTube Teacher <youtube.com/teachers> provides hundreds of playlists aligned with common educational standards. They are organized by subject and grade level. For instance, you can find sets of videos on math topics like vector quantities, complex numbers, and kindergarten measurement.

10 - The Power of Voice

One of the advantages of video is the ability to capture spoken language. Whether teaching world languages, exploring presidential speeches, or analyzing poetry, video can be a powerful tool.

WatchKnowLearn <watchknowlearn.org> is a website that collects and organizes video clips for use in the curriculum. be advised that the website accesses content from other websites that may be filtered at your school. The reading section contains over 3000 videos.

Ask students to listen to Maya Angelou read her poem Still I Rise <watchknowlearn.org/Video.aspx?VideoID=3175>. Discuss whether the images selected from the videographer added to or distracted from the poem. Involve students in illustrating a poem of their choice.

Go to Art Babble <artbabble.org> and notice how the speakers discuss topics related to art. Ask students to select a piece of art to share in a short narrated video. For more ideas, explore the many Smithsonian art channels on YouTube including:

African Art - youtube.com/user/SmithsonianAfricanAr

American Art - youtube.com/user/americanartmuseum

Archives of American Art - youtube.com/user/SmithsonianAAA

National Design Museum - youtube.com/user/cooperhewitt

National Portrait Gallery - youtube.com/user/NatPortraitGallery

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden - youtube.com/user/hirshhornmuseum

Freer-Sackler - youtube.com/user/FreerSackler

11 - Self-Paced Support for Standards

Sometimes you're seeking a quality instructional experience to support a content-area standard. TeachersDomain <teachersdomain.org> is a great place to start. This free digital media service provides video clips and support materials for popular public broadcasting media programs like NOVA.

Nature, Cyberchase, Between the Lions, American Experience, and others.

Go to the Environmental Public Health area of TeachersDomain <teachersdomain.org/special/enh> for video-rich lessons tied to topics related to human health and the environment. The website includes self-paced lessons for students with embedded video elements.

Explore PBS LearningMedia <pbs-learningmedia.org> for lots of lessons connecting videos with the Common Core curriculum.

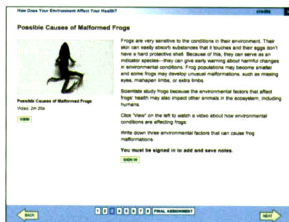
12 - Get Social

Increasingly, social networking features are being woven into video content websites. **Untamed Science** <untamedscience.com> is a project developed by teachers and scientists to make science fun for students. They encourage teachers and their students to participate as Ecogeeks. Rather than simply watching videos, get your students involved with creating their own images and videos to share as part of the project.

Involve students by having them explain complex topics to others through video. Show them examples of how fun learning can be through YouTube channels like **History for Music Lovers** <youtube.com/user/historyteachers> and **The Center on Congress at Indiana University** <youtube.com/user/TheCenteronCongress>; and **Go Retro: Connect Historical Footage with 21st Century Skills**

Want to have some fun in your library and address standards, too? Revisit **Jiminy Cricket**. Many of the original videos can be found on YouTube. Or, connect historical footage with curriculum activities. Ask students to talk about how times have changed. Comparing then and now is a great deep thinking activity as well as an interesting way to weave history across the curriculum. It's also an opportunity to discuss primary source video materials.

The 1951 educational film **Duck and Cover** <archive.org/details/gov.ntis.ava11109vnb1> is a great example. How did the video reflect the time that it was created? What has changed?



How Does Your Environment Affect Your Health self-paced, media-rich lesson from Teacher's Domain

The Internet Archive <archive.org> is a wonderful place to seek out videos. The FedFlix section <archive.org/details/FedFlix> features the best of United States government films that are now in the public domain. This means that students can use the footage in their own videos.

For high school students, the **American Politics** <laits.utexas.edu/gov310/FAD> page contains links to many historical videos.

CONCLUSION

Compared to today's computer-generated animation and cutting-edge realism, **Jiminy Cricket** educational films may seem sadly dated. However, the qualities of great learning experiences remain the same. The key is getting your students actively involved with the video content and extending the experience beyond the screen.

BOOKMARKIT

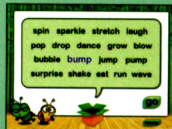
JOANNE TROUTNER

BEST NEW SOFTWARE



Noodle Words (<http://noodleworks.com/>). Ages 4 - 7 Designed for emerging readers, this whimsical educational app provides youngsters with the option to really learn and understand 18 action words. Directions are provided via audio from a delightful animated bee which shows up sporadically during a session. Youngsters begin by tapping the "word box" or selecting the all option for the entire list to appear. A random word appears on the screen from the word box or the selected word from the all bubble. The selection is spoken in an engaging word bug voice. Tap the word and it does the action. For example, "run" runs around the screen. Dragging the word around the screen introduces another animation and the "ing" form of the word. The "Noodle Bugs" also help reinforce the word by doing an animation which illustrates the meaning. For example, they eat various snacks for the word "eat."

The **Tips for Parents** section provides you with the built in tricks embedded in the app. These range from tips on using a rapid tap of the word box, dragging the word, and other fun learning options. This well constructed app makes a wonderful learning center and a great addition to a parent list of good purchases. **Noodle Words** ties to Common Core standards K.L.6 "Use words and phrases acquired through conversation, reading and being read to, and responding to texts" and K.RFS.2 "Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds." The app operates on both the iPhone and iPad platforms.



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